

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 728

By Williams

A RESOLUTION to designate August 2018 as "Shingles Awareness and Improvement Month" in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, herpes zoster (shingles) is a disease caused by the same virus (zoster) that causes chickenpox; therefore, any individual who has contracted chickenpox is at-risk for shingles (approximately ninety-eight percent of U.S. adults); and

WHEREAS, nearly one in three people in the U.S. will contract shingles in their lifetime, corresponding to an estimated one million people annually; and

WHEREAS, the risk of contracting shingles increases with age; nearly one-half of those affected are over sixty years of age, and one-half of people living until eighty-five years of age will develop shingles; and

WHEREAS, shingles is a viral infection that causes a painful rash that can be severe; other symptoms include long-term nerve pain, fever, headache, chills, upset stomach, muscle weakness, skin infection, scarring, and decrease or loss of vision or hearing; and

WHEREAS, as many as twenty percent of adults who have contracted shingles will develop postherpetic neuralgia, a debilitating complication of shingles that causes severe pain, may interfere with sleep and recreational activities, and may be associated with clinical depression; and

WHEREAS, vaccines have reduced the burden of widespread and often fatal diseases, enabling individuals to lead longer and healthier lives while reducing healthcare costs; and

WHEREAS, although much attention has been paid to the importance of childhood vaccinations, there is a general lack of awareness of adult-recommended vaccines; and

WHEREAS, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee of Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommend that healthy adults fifty years of age and older be vaccinated against shingles to prevent shingles and shingles-related complications; and

WHEREAS, despite the recommendations of CDC officials and other experts that all healthy adults in such age group be vaccinated against shingles, as of 2015, only thirty percent of eligible adults had received the shingles vaccine, and

WHEREAS, the annual economic burden of shingles in affected American adults is estimated to be between \$782 million and \$5 billion; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) has stated that one of the six causes of excess costs in the U.S. healthcare system is missed prevention opportunities; and

WHEREAS, millions of American adults go without routine and recommended vaccinations because of lack of knowledge of the opportunities for vaccination available in the healthcare delivery system; and

WHEREAS, as the month of August is observed as National Immunization Awareness Month, residents of Tennessee should be encouraged to speak with their healthcare providers to ensure that they have been properly vaccinated against shingles according to current CDC and ACIP recommendations; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that August 2018 is designated as "Shingles Awareness and Improvement Month" in Tennessee to increase public awareness of the importance of adults being vaccinated against shingles and to promote outreach and education efforts concerning adult vaccination.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Health is encouraged to promote "Shingles Awareness and Improvement Month" by urging healthcare practitioners to discuss the vaccine for shingles with adult patients and including such information in its current programs and initiatives to raise public awareness of the importance of adult vaccination.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Commissioner of Health.